

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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R 071201Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6029

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 6427

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CB

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION WITH PRIME MINISTER: DOMESTIC POLITICAL SIT-
UATION

1. PRIME MINISTER RAISED WITH ME IN COURSE OF OUR MEETING
MAY 7 THE DETERIORATING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIS GOVERNMENT
AND THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND ASKED ME TO PASS ON HIS
CONCERN TO MARSHAL LON NOL WITH WHOM I AM LUNCHING ALONE
TOMORROW. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE ASSEMBLY WANTS
THE THREE CABINET MEMBERS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE REPUBLICAN
PARTY TO DEFEND THEIR MINISTRIES BEFORE THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY. THE REPUBLICAN PARTY CABINET MEMBERS REFUSE
TO APPEAR BEFORE THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BECAUSE THEIR
PARTY DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE ASSEMBLY AS PRESENTLY
CONSTITUTED. THE PRIME MINISTER HAS OFFERED TO SPEAK
ON BEHALF OF THSE REPUBLICAN CABINET MINISTERS BEFORE
THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BUT THE ASSEMBLY
MEMBERS NOW REFUSE THIS COMPROMISE PROPOSAL. PRIME
MINISTER CALIMED THAT A NUMBER OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT
LEAFLETS HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED IN TOWN CRITICIZING
HIM FOR VIOLATING THE CONSTITUTION. HE HOPED THAT I
COULD WEIGH IN HIS BEHALF WITH THE MARSHAL SO TAT
THE CHIEF OF STATE WOULD ACT TO DISPEL THE MALAISE IN
THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

2. I REPLIED THAT I WOULD TALK TO THE MARSHAL ABOUT THIS
MATTER BUT THAT I COULD ONLY REITERATE WHAT I HAD TOLD
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OTHER KHMERS: THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WOULD BE UNABLE TO

UNDERSTAND POLITICAL BICKERING WHEN THE KHMER NATION IS
"IN DANGER". PERSONALLY I THOUGHT THE COMPROMISE HE
OFFERED MADE SENSE AND WHEN I HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY
OF DISCUSSING THIS WITH THE ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT I WILL
MAKE THIS POINT.
DEAN

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